(d) whether there is any proposal to increase the foreign airline services to Thiruvananthapuram in the wake of national carriers decision?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

(d) Thiruvananthapuram is already available as a point of call to several foreign airlines. Actual operations are, however matters of commercial judgement of the airlines and traffic demand.

Air connectivity to historical cities

†4181. SHRI JANESHWAR MISHRA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that several States in the country have requested for new airports keeping in view the growing number of tourists;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government propose to extend the domestic flights to small and big cities keeping in view the rising number of air passengers;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) whether Government are formulating any action plan to connect the ancient and historical cities in the country with air flights?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. A number of cities ad towns have been proposed by some State Governments for construction of new airports such as Pakyong (Sikkim), Chiethu (Nagaland), Mopa (Goa), Chakan & Navi Mumbai (Maharashtra), Ludhiana (Punjab), Ajmer (Rajasthan), Gulbarga, Bellary & Bijapur (Karnataka), Kannur (Kerala) and Itanagar (Arunachal Pradesh).

(c) to (e) Government has laid down route dispersal guidelines with a view to achieve better regulation of air transport services taking into account the need for air transport services of different regions of the country including North-Eastern region. It is, however, upto the airlines to provide air services to specific places depending upon the traffic demand and commercial viability. As such, the airlines are free to operate anywhere in the country subject to compliance of route dispersal guidelines issued by the Government.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.